

The Mask Is Off!

Workers! Wednesday, January 7, 1920, will remain forever a historical day in the history not only of this country but of the entire world.

The New York State Legislature in session at Albany, has on that day thrown out five Socialist "representatives." But this action in itself did not make the act so historical as what followed it.

An outburst of "indignation" arose over the entire country, and, just think of it, liberals and reactionaries alike denounced this action and demanded the immediate reinstatement of the five assemblymen.

But you may desire to know how is it that they were almost unanimously thrown out and yet those newspapers and men who stand for the worst kind of reaction and suppression of freedom, came out against this particular action?

It is for the very reason, that these reactionaries and liberals with their newspapers denounced their action, that this occurrence has become of real historical and significant importance.

We desire only, that every worker in this country and throughout the world, would try to learn and remember this great reason, for then he or she will realize how the workers have always been betrayed.

Just pause a moment to study and listen to the reasons of the reactionaries, socialists and liberals alike!

The reactionary men and newspapers based their main arguments against this action by stating that such action will kill the "faith of the people in representative government," that "we have deported men and women for not using constitutional methods for changing conditions, and now by ousting constitutionally duly elected representatives, we are proving just what the extreme radicals accused us of, and we are by such action fermenting a real revolution."

The liberals sang an entirely different song. They cried that such an act makes it an utter impossibility for them to continue to appeal to the workers to resort only to "constitutional conditions."

The Socialists vehemently asserted that "never will they be intimidated in stopping to use legal means of changing conditions but just as their brother-socialists under Bismarck, they will keep on clinging to the constitutional methods."

Ever since the Anarchist idea came into existence, its propagators, its theorists, and followers have always insisted and proven that constitutional governments or despotic governments are all alike, as far as the exploited workers are concerned.

We Anarchists, have insisted that both these kinds of governments have **purposely** given this "franchise of voting" to the people, (over whom they actually rule), in order to make them believe that they, the people, have any say in the government.

We have always insisted that governments were established and are kept in existence for a very plain purpose—that of continuing this system of exploitation which keeps us workers enslaved.

It is these exploiting offsprings of former brigand conquerors of olden ages and present legalized robbers, who tell you through their press and pulpit, that you are “free” men, “free” to vote for whomever you please.

But what actually happens when you use that right?

If you ever succeed, after many waiting years, in electing a friend of labor, or a laborer, he usually becomes as it is most natural for him to do, a dishonest politician as the rest of his associates who make up the legislative thief houses of the country, are. Occasionally, however, there appears one who refuses to become dishonest. What happens then? Either he is defeated by every crooked means available, at the next election, or he is thrown out of the legislatures and congresses whose chief motto seems to be that no honest man has any right to enter these houses of charlatans, swindlers, thieves and mounte banks!

We Anarchists have also repeatedly asserted that no matter what good intentions the liberal or socialist may have as to what he or she would do when elected, it usually happens that they can never accomplish anything, not even protest. (A protest resolution against the recent raids by the government, introduced by a socialist alderman in New York City, was never read further than the first sentence in the legislative hall. And how many workers spent their last cent, and rejoiced when their representatives have been elected, only to learn now, that they could not even raise a voice of protest. . . .).

The tragedy of the workers throughout the entire world has always been that thanks to such well meaning reformers and socialists they had unfortunately chosen the road of Least Resistance!

But what a terrible price the workers have and are still paying for it! During strikes, scores of workers are killed and injured. The reactionary papers either suppress the news or belittle it. The reformer protests against these “outrages.” The socialist says “I told you so—why don’t you vote the socialist ticket?” And in the meantime, the workers, instead of **rising** as we Anarchists urge, to avenge these murders and prevent future ones, permit the killing to continue year after year, in every strike of any importance.

The cost of living is rising higher and higher. The pay envelopes, though seemingly large, are not enough. The reactionary press and men keep silent or drop a line now and then about “investigating” which leads to nothing. The reformer protests. The socialists again promise relief when elected, and gloat in revenge for not having been elected. . . . None of them have the courage of the Anarchist to explain to the workers, that the quickest, surest and easiest way to relieve the high cost of living, is, for the workers to seize all food stores, take possession of all the factories, and run them for the benefit of only those who work.

Workers make sacrifices every moment of their lives to the altar of Mammon (money), through the ever increasing number of victims, young and old alike, caused by accidents, and diseases that

are due entirely to this system and could easily be prevented. The reactionaries and their press keep silent. The reformer murmurs protests. The socialist again promises to give relief when elected—until then he gives sympathy . . .

Again it is the Anarchist who boldly asserts, that this also can be stopped quickly by destroying the present society, which does not prevent, but on the contrary, aids by its existence, to make such accidents and diseases possible. For the basis and foundation of the present society is GREED and PROFIT.

Workers are appealed to, then forced to go out to fight in wars which are fought solely for the benefit of capitalism. The reactionaries of the pulpit and press call in the name of Patriotism (dollars) and righteousness (profits) to fight in the war (while they remain safe at home).

The reformer at first protests and then is also touched by "national feelings." The Socialists call protest meetings. The people come out ready by **an uprising** to stop the war. (Boston Common meeting, 1917). Their meeting is attacked. Instead of calling for a general strike, the Socialist Party, as usual in such cases, issued its everlasting paper "protests" against the unconstitutional attack upon a constitutional law-abiding assembled people"! Once more the Anarchists came out and dared to say that it is only by a General Strike that the war will be stopped, and it is up to the workers to bring it about. But the workers feared a general strike. They submitted to conscription and paid the price for it when thousands of their dear ones were killed or crippled.

And now that the five Socialist "representatives of the people" have been thrown out, the reactionaries of the press and pulpit are crying out in protest, not because they care so much that the people should have their representatives there, but because they fear something else . . . They had always preached to you, that you were free to vote and elect whomever you pleased, but now by such a foolish act, you might lose faith in your freedom to vote and elect whom you desire. . . Such an act has **torn off the mask of the hypocrisy of governmental representation**. It has shown its worthlessness. The same pulpit and press will continue to keep an utter silence, a hundred years from now, if you will foolishly persist in trusting to representative government. And were you ever to succeed in electing enough honest men, any law passed by them of any importance, would be declared "unconstitutional" by some wealthy lackey hypocrite of the Supreme Court of legalized robbery, and would not go thru!

The reformer and Socialist also tell you to wait for a future heaven, when they are elected and then betray you, as the German or French Socialists have done.

We Anarchists, and workers, say to you, our co-workers:

The fake mask of political deceitful representation has been torn off forever by the act of the New York Assembly.

No honest man would try to become straight by first becoming a crook. Nor would any doctor cure patients suffering from cancer, by innoculating other people with the germs. Therefore no honest

men, can make any sensible being believe, that they could remain honest or do any good amongst such a band of brigand thieves and scoundrels as every legislative robbery house in the country consist of!

Trust in no politician to bring you freedom. If you want to stop the high cost of living, stop the useless victims of disease, accidents, and starvation, stop the present robbery system of exploitation, if you want to accomplish this you must drop your course of the "law of least resistance" (in the long run it has and will continue to cost you a more terrible price than that of an uprising). You must cease working! Declare a General Strike! Take possession of all the food stores and factories! Reorganize the entire society upon the basis of Communism! Destroy all the sky-scrapers and tenement houses of the present!! Build houses surrounded by gardens and orchards... Let the sweet fragrance of flowers and fresh, lucious fruits replace the present stench of disease and suffocation, and filth. Let each one do his utmost in inventing as in the olden days, in order to make life easier. Let the work we do be a joy to us, not a burden. It can only be so when we shall know that the fruit of our labor will be our's! Let suffering, disease, and want cease. Let Love replace Hatred. Let the welfare of each one be the welfare of all!

To bring about such a society, the ANARCHIST COMMUNE SOCIETY, all workers must refuse to participate in politics. Instead we must organize into WORKERS COMMUNE SOVIETS. GO ON A GENERAL STRIKE and then start the SOCIAL REVOLUTION for the overthrow of the present system.

This is the lesson to be learned by the mask that has been torn off at Albany, the mask of humbug governmental representation.

American Anarchist Federated Commune Soviets